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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/849,182	05/20/2004	Takashi Okada	253303US0	7254
22850	7590	08/24/2006	EXAMINER	
C. IRVIN MCCLELLAND		OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.	CHUO, TONY SHENG HSIANG	
1940 DUKE STREET		ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314	ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1745	

DATE MAILED: 08/24/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/849,182	OKADA ET AL.
Examiner	Art Unit	
Tony Chuo	1745	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 May 2004.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-3 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-3 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 20 May 2004 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 11/26/04.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

1. Acknowledgment is made of applicant's claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d). The certified copy has been filed in Application No. 10/849,182, filed on 5/20/04.

Information Disclosure Statement

3. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 11/26/04 was filed on 11/26/04. The submission is in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97. Accordingly, the information disclosure statement is being considered by the examiner.

Drawings

4. The drawings filed on 5/20/04 are accepted by the examiner.

Double Patenting

5. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to

be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

6. Claim 3 is provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1 and 5 of copending Application No. 11/212,688. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because claims 1 and 5 of application no. 11/212,688 and claim 3 of the present application both claim a proton conductive membrane comprising a sulfonic group containing polyarylene copolymer comprising a component represented by formula (A) and a component represented by formula (B-1).

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

7. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

8. Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Sohma et al (US 2004/0197632). The Sohma reference teaches an electrode structure comprising a positive electrode “1”, a negative electrode “1”, a polymer electrolyte

membrane "2" in between the positive and negative electrodes, a separator for feeding a methanol solution as fuel, a separator, a separator for feeding an oxidizing gas wherein the polymer electrolyte membrane comprises a sulfonated polyarylene consisting of 0.5% to 100% by mol of a first repeating unit represented by formula (1) and 0 to 99.5% by mol of a second repeating unit represented by formula (2) (See paragraphs [0005],[0006],[0013],[0014],[0015]). The repeat unit represented by formula (1) is equivalent to the repeat unit represented by formula (A) that is claim by the applicant and the repeat unit represented by formula (2) is equivalent to the repeat unit represented by formula (B-1) that is claimed by the applicant. Burden is on the applicant to show differences in product comparison (*Ex parte Gray* 10 USPQ 2d 1922, 1925 (BPAI 1989)).

9. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

10. Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Asano et al (US 2002/0172850). The Asano reference teaches a membrane electrode assembly comprising an oxygen electrode "1", a fuel electrode "2", fuel passage "2a" for delivering fuel to the fuel electrode, oxygen passage "1a" for delivering air to the oxygen electrode, and a composite polymer electrolyte membrane "3" that comprises a sulfonated polyarylene polymer containing 7-35 mol% of an aromatic compound unit with an electron attractive group represented by formula (1) and 65-93 mol% of an aromatic

compound unit represented by formula (2) (See paragraphs [0033],[0078],[0079]). The aromatic compound unit represented by formula (1) is equivalent to the repeat unit represented by formula (B-1) that is claimed by the applicant and the aromatic compound unit represented by formula (2) is equivalent to the repeat unit represented by formula (A) that is claim by the applicant. Regarding formula (A), X is construed as being an electron withdrawing group, -CO-, and an electron donating group, -O-, m is 1, k is 1, and l is 0. Regarding formula (B-1), p is construed as being 0. Burden is on the applicant to show differences in product comparison (*Ex parte Gray* 10 USPQ 2d 1922, 1925 (BPAI 1989)). Examiner's note: Although Asano et al does not disclose a membrane electrode assembly for a direct methanol fuel cell, a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Tony Chuo whose telephone number is (571) 272-0717. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F, 8:30AM to 5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick Ryan can be reached on (571) 272-1292. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

TC



RAYMOND ALEJANDRO
PRIMARY EXAMINER